

NEW
SERIES

SEPTEMBER

VOL.
21

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All the Year Round

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PART 118

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1878.

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CONTENTS OF PART CXVIII.

No. DX.	PAGE	No. DXII.	PAGE
ALL OR NOTHING. Chapter X. Fools' Paradise	217	ALL OR NOTHING. Chapter XII. Bury House.....	270
Personally Conducted. Chapter V.....	233	How their Gardens grow in North America.....	285
Minceer at the Seaside	230	True. A Poem	276
Strange Burial Orders	235	Personally Conducted. Chapter VII.....	276
An Island Princess. Chapter VI.....	237	My Sister Dorothy. Chapter I.....	283
		Chapter II.....	285
No. DXI.		No. DXIII.	
ALL OR NOTHING. Chapter XI. He and She	241	ALL OR NOTHING. Chapter XIII. A Farewell and	
Personally Conducted. Chapter VI.....	240	a Meeting.....	289
The Spray of Seaweed. A Poem	251	A Royal Experiment	294
Islington-Super-Mare	252	Caricature in America.....	298
Cheap University Education	255	Personally Conducted. Chapter VIII.....	302
An Island Princess. Chapter VII.....	261	My Sister Dorothy. Chapter III.....	300
		Chapter IV.....	311

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309
311

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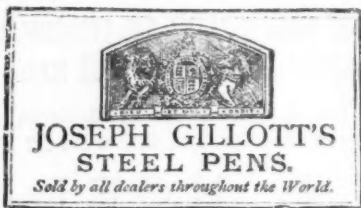
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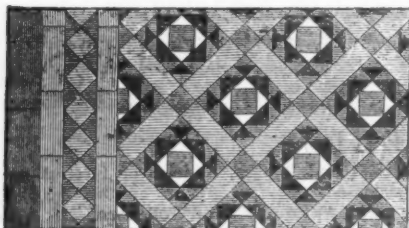
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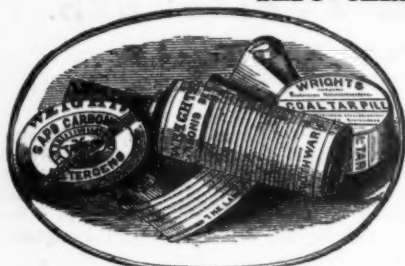
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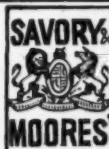
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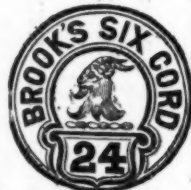
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A Weekly Journal
CONDUCTED BY
CHARLES DICKENS
WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
"HOUSEHOLD WORDS"

No. 510. NEW SERIES. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1878. PRICE TWOPENCE.

ALL OR NOTHING.

BY MRS. CASHEL HOEY,

AUTHOR OF "A HOUSE OF CARDS," "GRIFFITH'S DOUBLE,"
&c. &c.

CHAPTER X. FOOLS' PARADISE.

"By the time she finds out what has happened she won't care a straw." Such had been the easy and satisfying conclusion arrived at by Lady Rosa Chumleigh on her daughter's wedding-day, when she had succeeded in preventing her from learning the facts that had reversed Captain Dunstan's ineligibility. How much truth was there in that conclusion? How much knowledge of her daughter's real nature on the part of Lady Rosa did it reveal? Judging from Laura's general demeanour, Lady Rosa might have been pronounced perfectly right, and an admirable judge of character. This, however, was not altogether the case; there were other influences at work with Laura in addition to shallowness of feeling and the beneficent action of custom, on which her mother had reckoned, to induce her to take things quietly, and conform with a good grace to the novel circumstances in which her marriage with Robert Thornton had placed her.

Of course her ignorance of the death of Mrs. Drummond, and Edward Dunstan's succession to the inheritance of which he had been deprived by the admiral's will, did not last long. Almost immediately after her return from Scotland, Laura heard all about the matter. It would have been impossible that Laura could have heard of Edward Dunstan's too long-delayed good fortune without a certain

shock of regret—without a certain indulgence in the thought of "the might have been"—but the effect upon her of the ironical action of fate in the matter was divided from identity with its effect upon him by all the distance that separates a passion from a preference, a purpose from a fancy, and a defined life from a desultory one.

The intelligence had not been conveyed to Laura in her husband's presence, and this she had regarded as very fortunate—not so much for her own sake as for his; not because she was afraid of him—though she was so, just a little—but because she was learning to recognise and respect in him something of intensity and candour, which was not in herself, and which she would not wound with intention. She was glad she had had time to get over the first impression before she met her husband again, and then she began to feel a little surprise at the comparative ease with which she surmounted that first impression. If Robert Thornton had been a different kind of man, not so serious about things, and not so very, very much devoted to her, and of such strangely romantic notions, she would not have minded telling him, and the proceeding would have had its advantages, because it would have made him understand Lady Rosa thoroughly, and rendered things easier for the future; but, Robert Thornton being what he was, it would not do.

Laura's natural cleverness comprised the gift of caution, and the exigencies of her life under her mother's régime had cultivated that gift, so that even with Julia Carmichael she was not completely off her guard. The seemingly unnatural circumstance that the two girls should

have lived so long in the same house on perfectly affectionate terms, and that Julia should have known nothing whatever of the episode of Edward Dunstan's hopes and disappointment, is easily explicable. Lady Rosa had said, "I won't have this nonsense talked about to anyone; I don't choose Julia to know that such folly was ever contemplated;" and Laura had not dared to disobey her. She had not, indeed, felt inclined to do so; Laura had no gushingness about her, and when the marriage between herself and Mr. Thornton was arranged, she was very glad that the position had not been complicated by the necessity for explanations to Julia, for she felt uncomfortably certain that, had any such been called for, they must have assumed a palliative and exculpatory form.

Julia, if placed in Laura's circumstances, would have unquestionably shown fight. She might, indeed, have been prevented from marrying the man she loved because he was poor, if she had loved a man who could have been persuaded to withdraw his suit as Edward Dunstan had been persuaded, but her compliance would have stopped there; she could never have been induced to marry a man whom she did not love. This Laura felt so strongly that, laying, as she did, great store by Julia's affection, she was glad nothing had ever tempted her to disregard her mother's command, and, for the sake of present sympathy, to render herself suspect in Julia's eyes.

To the first feelings with which Laura had learned that, at the very time she had given herself to another, Edward Dunstan had realised all the hopes that had been dashed to the ground at Admiral Drummond's death, succeeded a speculation upon the sentiments of her father and mother on the occasion.

"Poor papa," thought Laura, as she dried the tears that had fallen, in no great abundance, from her eyes, "would have been quite content with him as he was; and I am sure he felt very sorry for both of us. He would be sorry for Mr. Thornton too, if he thought I should fret very much about it. Poor papa! And he told me he hoped I should be a good wife, and never give Mr. Thornton cause to regret that he had married me; and I promised I never would, if it were only for papa's sake. But mamma! I wonder whether she will speak of him to me. I wonder how and when she heard about it, and what she thought. I wonder

was she at all sorry for me, or did she regret that she had not let me have a little more time. I should think she must have felt a little regret, for, after all, my marriage was only a risk and a chance then; no one could have known how good Mr. Thornton would be to me."

Poor "Mr. Thornton!" If he could have known that his wife called him by that formal name even in her thoughts! If he could have known that gratitude of a tepid kind was the strongest sentiment he had as yet awakened in the heart that he tried so hard and so persistently to win!

A change came over Laura's mind, however, when she and Julia Carmichael met for the first time since Laura's marriage, and Julia related to her the incident of *The Morning Post*.

It was at Hunsford, where the newly-married pair proposed to make a very brief stay. The reception of Laura and her husband by Lady Rosa and the colonel had been characteristic. Lady Rosa patronised her son-in-law, and left Laura to the society of her father and her cousin—an arrangement which suited all parties except Mr. Thornton. He was an amiable man, and he had a very proper sense of the claims of his wife's parents upon him; but he disliked Lady Rosa, while he liked the colonel, and could have found a degree of pleasure in his company which was not altogether explicable, seeing that Colonel Chumleigh and himself had no pursuits or tastes in common—except Laura—but in that exception was the explanation of Mr. Thornton's liking for his father-in-law. He knew very well that he owed Lady Rosa's patronage to his fortune; he knew that he owed the colonel's kindness to the colonel's belief that Laura's happiness was safe and assured in his hands.

Laura had arrived at Hunsford in a mutinous mood; which had a mixed source, arising partly from the girlish impulse to display and assert her independence, and to show her tyrannical mother how completely she was her own mistress and "spoiled" by Mr. Thornton, and partly from the development of her intelligence, which had taught her to understand Lady Rosa's absolute heartlessness in all the transactions in which Laura had been concerned. She was looking brilliantly pretty—she was in high spirits, and she certainly did "show off" a little, to the amusement of Julia, and the surprise of Mr. Thornton, who had never seen any self-assertion

about Laura before. Lady Rosa, however, was perfectly equal to the occasion, and she put Laura in her place, as she afterwards expressed it, with such promptitude, that Laura went meekly to the rooms appropriated to her, with as thorough a sense of being snubbed as she had ever experienced in her life.

Julia accompanied her, and when the cousins were alone together they both laughed.

"It won't do, Laura," said Julia. "And you had better take care, or you'll find yourself dining at the side-table, like the French duchess-elect, who didn't curtsy low enough to her mamma. Lady Rosa is of opinion that 'my daughter's my daughter all the days of her life.' Her 'Don't litter the room, my dear, with your things;' her 'Keep your bonnet on till you go upstairs,' was quite in the old style."

"It was indeed," said Laura, ruefully. "But then," she added, cheering up, "so was papa quite in the old style, and the dogs, and you, Julia. And I have made up my mind not to mind mamma."

It was not until late in the evening that Julia had an opportunity of telling Laura about the little incident that had puzzled her so much. The cousins were in Laura's room, from whose bow-window, luxuriantly adorned with climbing hop and vine, they could trace the course of the colonel and Mr. Thornton, as they walked to and fro in the shrubbery, by the dull specks of fire omitted by their respective cigars; and Julia was brushing Laura's hair—a proceeding which was also quite in the old style, reminding the girls of those late talks which Lady Rosa had so often interrupted by her domiciliary visits.

"It was so very odd," said Julia, "so mysterious altogether, that I have been longing to find out about it. I could not have explained it all in writing, and so I just captured the newspaper, and put it away until I could show it to you. Of course I did not ask my uncle a question; it would only have disturbed him, and it is so awkward to have overheard anything that's not intended for one. I'll show it to you in a minute, when I've rolled up your hair."

She produced the copy of *The Morning Post*, and the two bright heads bent themselves over it. Laura had suspected from the first words of Julia's communication what it was that she should find in the newspaper, and she had betrayed nothing beyond curiosity.

"The paper was turned up so, and this was the page she pointed to," said Julia. Laura had already recognised the paragraph that contained the account of the death of Mrs. Drummond of Bevis, and the accession of her late husband's nephew to the estate. She said, very calmly:

"That must be the paragraph mamma pointed out to papa."

"That! But what has that to do with you? Why should Lady Rosa have hidden it from you? What could it have had to do with your marriage?"

"Nothing, in reality, but I daresay mamma thought it might have upset me. I never told you, dear Julia, because she forbade me, but this Captain Dunstan cared for me at one time, and—and it might have come to something only that Admiral Drummond left all his property to his wife instead of to Captain Dunstan, and so, of course, he could not marry."

Julia said nothing whatever when her cousin paused; she was literally too much astonished to speak.

"It was not very wise of mamma," Laura resumed, with a little hurry in her tone—she had a consciousness of what Julia was thinking—"to conceal this from me; she ought to have known that it would not have made any difference—then."

"But, Laura," said Julia, slowly, and with a steady look into her cousin's face, "did you care for Captain Dunstan? Would you have married him, if you had been allowed?"

"As things were?" asked Laura, with a blush, "well, perhaps not. At all events, it is better not to talk about it now, isn't it? No good can come of discussing it. I am very glad you told me, because it was not with my wish that there ever was any secret about it between you and me; but we had much better leave it there now."

Julia, though feeling that very little of the secret had been revealed, even now, could only assent. She folded up the newspaper, put it in her pocket, and was going to take leave of Laura for the night when a sudden remembrance struck her:

"Laura," she said, "this Captain Dunstan is the person whom Sir Wilfrid Esdaille expected to meet at Ceylon; I know that from John's last letter. He is coming home; you will see him. Tell me only one thing; shall you mind it?"

Great anxiety, even fear, were in Julia's mind as she asked this question, and they

expressed themselves in her voice. Laura was not insensible to them, nor to the difference between her cousin's way of thinking and her own.

"Don't be afraid," she said, taking Julia's hand tenderly, and looking up in the face that was bent over her with true solicitude; "I don't think I shall mind very much. When I heard this, I knew of course that he would come home, and that we might meet. But he knows about my marriage by this time, and he will not mind much either, I daresay. Nothing very tragical ever happens nowadays, you know"—and here Laura laughed, an unreal little laugh. "I daresay Captain Dunstan and I shall not meet for a long time, if ever, and perhaps he'll be married by that time."

"Nothing very tragical ever happens nowadays"—Julia's thoughts repeated Laura's words—"it seems to me that something very tragical has happened already."

"May I ask you just one thing more," Julia said, "and then I will never mention the subject again, if you like? Does Mr. Thornton know?"

"He does not."

"Oh, Laura! That is very wrong. And it is very unsafe."

"My dear Julia, excuse me if I differ with you on that point. You cannot possibly know Mr. Thornton's disposition so well as I do, and I am sure he had better never hear anything at all about it. Mamma would not allow me to say anything to him before we married, and I certainly shall not trouble his mind now."

"I suppose you know best, Laura, but it seems all wrong to me."

At this moment the cousins heard Mr. Thornton's step in the adjoining dressing-room, and Julia, much to Laura's relief, took leave of her for the night.

It seemed all very wrong to Julia Carmichael, who had already had her doubts about the safety, and the wisdom, and indeed the honesty of Laura's conduct in marrying, with so little love in her heart for the man with whom she had undertaken to pass and to share all her life; doubts which had become more and more defined as Laura's letters reached her, all lacking the tone which Julia's own feelings taught her to miss. And now, to discover that Laura had loved another—for Julia did not doubt that, though her direct question had been eluded—had relinquished him because he was

poor, and had allowed her husband to believe that she was quite fancy-free, was a great blow. Her different bringing up, and her natural rectitude of mind, rendered Julia keenly sensitive to the want of principle and the essential coarseness that characterised so many of the lives and the deeds of the people who formed the society in which her uncle and aunt moved; but hitherto, she had supposed her own relations to be actuated by motives a little superior to those which she plainly perceived to be at work around her. To her, the discovery of cold calculation, fickleness, and the absence of anything like an appreciation of the sacredness of marriage, was a revelation of profound immorality. She did not, indeed, extend the full blame of it to her uncle, because she was accustomed to think of him as lacking a will of his own, and as being ruled by Lady Rosa; still, in this extreme case she could not but despise him. This had all constituted, Julia thought sadly, a very bad beginning; how would things go on, and how would they end? She could only hope that Laura and Captain Dunstan might not meet; and she could not help wondering a little whether Captain Dunstan had been a very devoted lover, like Mr. Thornton, or had taken his fate with anything of the same composure which she imputed to Laura.

And then Julia was led by her reflections, as indeed often happened, to contemplate her own good fortune, her own security, her own exceeding happiness in being the chosen of her true and brave lover. No hesitation would she have had at any time in obeying the injunction:

Down upon your knees,

And thank Heaven, fasting, for a good man's love.

Her attitude of mind was most grateful for so immense a boon; but, as Julia said her prayers that night, and afterwards looked at the little packet of letters which rested always under her pillow, there was an additional fervour in her thankfulness, lent by the feeling of safety amid surroundings full of insecurity.

Lady Rosa Chumleigh and her daughter had never had much to say to one another at any time, and their mutual communicativeness was not increased by Laura's marriage. Laura had plenty to say to her father, and the colonel accepted her gay and pretty talkativeness as a satisfactory proof that all was right with her. He would have liked her to tell him that she was very "happy," rather than that

she was very "lucky;" for Laura still used the phrase that had jarred upon her father's ear on the eve of her wedding-day, and he would have liked to find her more actively and accurately interested in her husband's affairs and pursuits; but Colonel Chumleigh was accustomed to take his happiness in a cracked and flawed condition, and never quarrelled with anything short of utter smash. The more he saw of Robert Thornton, the more he liked him, and the deeper became his sense of his daughter's good fortune. Thornton's practical good sense and energy were perhaps rather oppressive to the colonel individually. He was dimly aware that many things might be much better managed at Hunsford than they were, and he entirely acquiesced in the suggestions of his son-in-law as the two walked round the small domain; but he felt at the same time that they would never be acted on. To see that a thing was wrong, and to set it right with the least possible delay, was Robert Thornton's way; to see that a thing was wrong, to "mention it" to Lady Rosa, and, if his observation remained unnoticed, to forget the grievance as soon and as completely as possible, was the colonel's way.

"Thornton is wonderfully clever," Laura's father said, more than once, admiringly, to Laura, and she answered, each time, carelessly: "Oh yes, he is, indeed!" But the new and admired son-in-law was not clever enough to change the order of things at Hunsford, and he had little satisfaction in being there beyond that which he derived from the contemplation of Laura's pleasure in the society of her father and her cousin. If he had somewhat of the feeling of an outsider himself, he was generous enough not to mind it; there was less of the strangeness between him and his young wife—slight, but distinct—that had troubled him vaguely, now that they were in a place and among people familiar to her. If that strangeness should be conquered, if the something that was wanting in Laura's looks and tones when they were addressed to him should be supplied by her natural pleasure in returning for a little while to her old home, he would be more than satisfied to endure the rudeness of Lady Rosa and the dulness of the colonel. There was such a good time coming! A time of freedom and delight upon the sea which he had always loved; of dear companionship; a time when he should win all

his wife's mind and heart, and make her see the beauty and the meaning of the world, as he had learned to see them, dwarfing the petty aims and interests among which she had hitherto lived.

Robert Thornton had not, as yet, persuaded himself that he derived from his marriage the perfect happiness that the winning of Laura was to have brought with it; but he fully believed that perfect happiness was to come, and explained to himself that it was delayed only because the winning of Laura was not absolutely complete. She was his wife, his pride, his lady-love; but not yet his true and perfect companion, the other half of himself, as in his romantic and thorough way of thinking and of feeling he held she should be. That would come when she should love him as he loved her, when the girl should have grown into the woman; when all that half-childish feeling on her part that he was "very kind to her," and "so nice about things," whose frequent expression jarred upon him, should have passed away into the peaceful equality and entire oneness of a perfect union. Laura's brightness and grace had extraordinary charms for her husband; he was never disturbed by one small or jealous thought as she lavished them on all around her; the love she so little comprehended was all too noble for such pitifulness as this. But, sometimes, it occurred to him to wish that he had known more of her own particular world, had seen and heard more of the subjects that interested her, and so escaped a certain sense of his own stupidity and slowness which troubled him. It provoked him that he should have to ask her to explain an allusion which amused her, or that he should feel at a loss when she was talking gaily with the people whom Lady Rosa—with a discreet sense of the awkwardness of a family party where one of its members is a stranger—invited to meet them at Hunsford. All this, however, was only for a little while, and in the meantime it never came into Robert Thornton's mind to consider that Laura was as little acquainted with his particular world, as little familiar with his tastes and interests; but that the distinction between them was, that she did not in the least regret this unfamiliarity, had no wish to repair it, in fact did not think about it at all. If ever there was love all made of humbleness and of observance, it was the love of Robert Thornton for his young

wife; and his innermost misgiving, that which he hearkened to most unwillingly, never whispered to him anything more formidable than that if, indeed, all her heart were not yet his, it was only because its strongest and deepest feelings were still sleeping. In time, and only a little time, their slumber would yield to his wooing voice, his tender and earnest touch; and then, then the dream of his lonely, pure, reticent, imaginative life would be fully realised, the satisfaction of his heart would be as complete as the fascination of his fancy had been.

He was a sad blunderer in some ways, he knew, and sometimes he feared that Laura's girlish susceptibility, that perfectly innocent vanity which was one of her charms, and which, as regarded himself, he liked to believe to be a deeper feeling, was hurt by his want of perception. She would receive a dozen compliments on her dress, for instance, and receive them with such sparkling smiles as proved the pleasure they gave her; and he, who had seen the "lovely" gown or the "delicious" wreath before anyone else, he on whose arm she had come floating down the staircase to delight the eyes of the assembled guests, would have been perfectly unconscious that the gown was a new one, or that she had not worn the wreath a dozen times.

On the third day of their stay at Hunsford, Robert Thornton, coming into the drawing-room rather late, saw Laura handling, with many expressions of admiration, a great bunch of Cape jessamine. He drew near, and remarked on the beauty of the blossoms.

"Yes," said Laura, "they are my favourite flowers, and Captain King remembered about them. He got them at Dane Vale this afternoon."

Dane Vale was a show place in the neighbourhood, and the party from Hunsford had gone there that day.

Robert said, very low, and bending over the flowers: "It was stupid of me to forget that you had wished for some Cape jessamine; when we were there to-day, I might as well have thought of it as Captain King."

Laura smiled, her frankest smile, as she answered:

"Oh, it does not matter, as I've got the flowers."

The next moment dinner was announced. Julia Carmichael went in that day with Mr. Thornton, and found him an unusually

silent companion. She had observed the foregoing little incident, and she wondered whether her cousin's husband, who certainly did not shine in society, and was a bad hand at petits soins, was inclined to be jealous? It looked like it; and if it were so, how would he take it, if fate should ever throw Edward Dunstan in Laura's path again, and Robert Thornton should come to know about him? Julia was mistaken; there was not any jealousy in Mr. Thornton's meditations upon an incident apparently too trifling to be worth a thought; there was only vexation with himself.

The effect upon Laura of her visit to Hunsford was to deepen her feelings towards her husband on the side concerning which he was the least solicitous. She did feel so immensely indebted to him for having taken her away; she took such real pleasure in contrasting her present independence with her former thralldom; she enjoyed so fully every point and item of the contrast. It could not fail to occur to her that all this might have been achieved equally by her marriage with Edward Dunstan, if she had only been allowed to wait a little while; and she knew very well—though she loyally strove not to think about it, being a good girl according to her lights—that she and Dunstan would have suited one another better than did she and Mr. Thornton. The latter was the best and kindest fellow in all the world, but it was a little uphill work; she could not deny that, and the very best thing that could have happened to her was this visit to Hunsford, just as she was beginning to feel it so; it made her so thoroughly thankful for her escape.

"The fact is," Laura had said to herself, on the very day of the incident of the Cape jessamine, "I am a commonplace, ordinary person, and I don't want anything out of the common in the way of sentiment; I suppose that must be it. And he was just the same; he liked the kind of life and amusements, and the everyday goings on that I liked, just the same as all the rest of the world, and so we should have got on splendidly together. But Mr. Thornton is a superior person; he really is much better, and cleverer, and more serious than I or—he—or, indeed, anyone, and that makes him a little—what is it?—tiresome, I suppose I must call it, for I don't know any other word that says exactly what I mean, though that's a disrespectful one. However, I must not

think of him now, and I am bound to hope he is not thinking of me. The old lady in Scotland was perfectly right. Mr. Thornton is much too good for me, even much too good to me; she was not more alive to that than I am now. I wonder, when we have done with the yachting and come to town, whether he will be much in the house, or will find amusements out of doors, like other men."

Laura would have been quite genuinely shocked if anyone could have divined her thoughts and interpreted them, briefly thus: "The truth is, your husband adores and bores you." Nevertheless, this was pretty nearly true. And Laura might have cleared the easy barrier between feeling vaguely that it was so, and admitting that she felt it, but for the refresher administered to her memory by her visit to Hunsford. How glad she was to think that Julia would not have very much more of Lady Rosa, and of the sort of turmoil which the "certain uncertainty" of her temper kept the house in, to put up with; though Julia minded it much less than she did. Next to getting away for a walk, or a ride, with her father, Laura most enjoyed talking with Julia over her future prospects, and planning wedding presents on a scale which made Julia laugh.

"But, Julia," Laura said gravely, when her cousin bade her remember that there was some little difference between the requirements of the wife of a man in Mr. Thornton's position, and those of the wife of a man in John Sandilands', "that is all nonsense. Whatever I have for myself, I should like you to have, and I am sure Mr. Thornton would wish the same."

"So am I," said Julia, "and that whether he should be of your way of thinking in the matter, or of mine; for he always wishes the same, does he not? Ah, I shall not have such a model husband as yours, Laura. I never saw a man so desperately in love in my life. And people say that kind of thing does not survive matrimony. However, I am happy to say I never believed that."

"Well, I don't know," said Laura, slowly. "It depends, I suppose, upon people's dispositions. I mean whether they like romance, you know. Mr. Thornton is worse, if anything."

"Worse?"

"Oh, how stupid of me," Laura laughed, "I mean more silly about me, always thinking about me—you know the kind of thing; and, as I am not at all romantic, I

don't think I like it particularly. Of course, he is excessively kind and nice to me, only—only——"

"Only he's too much in love with you. That's it, Laura; I suspected as much. Never mind; if there's any truth in what people who know the world tell us, that's a state of things that can't last. You will always have the best of husbands, you know, even if he leaves off being your lover."

"She did not care for him before," thought Julia, sadly, after this little bit of confidential talk, "and he has not been able to make her care for him since. Poor fellow!"

"How quick and clever Julia is," thought Laura, "though she is so romantic about herself and her John. I am sure I hope she is right. It will be so much pleasanter when Mr. Thornton leaves off being in love with me; and it can't last for ever." Laura was brighter, happier, more deserving of her father's pet name than ever, after this happy thought came to her, and in radiant looks and the highest spirits she left Hunsford with her husband for Southampton.

PERSONALLY CONDUCTED.

v.

I AM afraid I cannot be a really conscientious young person. But I can admire those who are. When, after collecting our luggage and making our way under the broiling afternoon sun across the smart new bridge to our hotel on the other side, our ever-thoughtful shepherd suddenly arrests our steps with the question, "Will we start off, within say half an hour or so, to visit the Lion and the Glacier Garden, and the Chapel of William Tell?"—it is quite an experience when the citizen in the goatee interrupts himself in the very middle of a portentous yawn, to enquire solemnly:

"Wal, sir. Is it a thing a man oughter do?"

And, once assured that such a course is at least customary with the properly brought-up traveller at the Lake of the Four Cantons, our citizen braces himself to the task with a serious determination which is not without its effect even upon the weaker-minded among us. The gentleman from Manchester is the first to give in his adhesion. He clearly has it on his mind that the twenty-two pounds ten shillings he has paid for his passage must

be thoroughly worked out, and that to miss anything that might be seen or done upon the way will be a distinct act of wastefulness. As for Checksuit, being up all night seems to be his normal condition. He will just have a B. and S., you know, or something of that sort, and he'll be up to anything. Even Nellie, it seems, has promised "somebody" a sketch of the famous chapel, which Dick, who can really draw a capital straight line, with the aid of a ruler, must, of course, superintend. I begin to think that I shall be the only recreant, and am seriously making up my mind to go with the rest, when dear old Mrs. Crumpelhorne comes to the rescue, and emphatically avows her determination not to budge another inch.

"It's all very well for you young people, my dears, but I'm going to bed; and if you don't see me again till to-morrow at breakfast, pray don't anybody be the least surprised."

And then I muster up courage to admit that I, too, have an exposition of sleep upon me, and, stumbling up flight after flight of never-ending stairs, find myself at last in just such another little oven as I left in Paris, with just the same sun blazing down upon just the same firmly-closed windows, and just the same odd baked smell, as though all the hundreds of defunct flies that strew the window-sill had been so many burnt currants on the top of an overdone cake. In two minutes I have forced the window open, have slipped off my dress and the boots which seem, all of a sudden, to have grown so much too small for me, and am fast asleep, with all the odd foreign sounds floating up from below and mingling pleasantly with my dreams.

There are none of my party in the drawing-room when I come down, nor do they make their appearance for some considerable time. Dinner is in full swing when we at last troop in, and march up the long room to the places reserved for us at the end of the table. Our entrance creates quite a sensation. Knives and forks are laid momentarily aside, and at least a score of eye-glasses turned upon us as the waiters pause, dish in hand, to afford the usual explanation, "Un parti de Gawks." But what does that matter to us? You may stare one person out of countenance, but not five-and-forty. On the contrary, it is rather the score of other diners who appear to have taken their places with unseemly haste, instead of

waiting for us. Checksuit, indeed, boldly takes that view of the matter, audibly expressing, for my especial benefit, a conviction that those hungry covies have stole a march upon us, and a hope that they have not mopped up all the grub. I have a horrible conviction that he is manœuvring to secure the seat next to me, and am actually meditating the cruel resource of thrusting myself in between Dick and Nellie, when to my equal astonishment and delight, the head-waiter comes to my rescue. Checksuit's number is nine hundred and ninety-nine? Ah, precisely, will he do him the favour to step this way? And before poor Checksuit quite understands what is being done with him, he finds himself safely installed half-a-dozen seats off, and I breathe again.

Even now, however, I am not quite safe. My place has been assigned to me quite at the end of our "parti de Gawks," and between me and the nearest member of the general public is still one vacant chair. It is leaning forward against the table, as though it were saying grace on its own account, and Checksuit, tilting his own chair, and looking along the line of backs, catches sight of its uplifted hinder legs.

"'Ere, I say—waiter—garsong—what's yer name. Why can't I go there?"

A passing waiter, skilled in the English tongue, informs him that the coveted place is "réservé." But that troubles Checksuit not a whit.

"Oh reservéy be 'anged!" he protests, and is in the very act of leaving his own seat to take possession, when, to my intense relief, I hear the head-waiter's voice obsequiously proclaiming:

"Numéro quatorze? Oui, monsieur. Par ici." And who should drop quietly into the contested seat, but—Mr. Horace Neville!

It is not a very promising evening, as, when the long clattering table d'hôte is over, we stroll out on to the shady gravel walk that skirts the shore of the lake. The sun is setting gloriously enough, and the long expanse of the lake is a lovely sight, under the deep red flush that throws its hot glow over all. But the mountain-tops are swathed in clouds that, when the gorgeous sunset tints shall have faded away, will look terribly black and threatening, and Pilatus frowns with his gloomiest air. We shall not have a fine day to-morrow, so we had better make up our minds to it at once.

Our own more especial little party, too,

is rather broken up. Mrs. Crumpehorne has kept her word, and stayed quietly in bed, and Nellie has been altogether sequestered by her good-natured old chaperon, who insists upon it that she shall not spoil her bright young eyes by sitting up one minute longer. So poor Dick's occupation is gone for the night, and I put in my appearance among the rank, beauty, and fashion of Lucerne, swarming like gnats along the water's edge after the scorching heat of the day, with a double escort of cavaliers.

Then we wander off along the old bridge; not the grand iron construction across whose fine broad roadway we came this morning from the station, but the narrow old wooden gallery, roofed in like an old-fashioned country church, and with quaint, old, more than half-effaced paintings on the heavy beams and traverses, the meaning of which we vainly strive to decipher in the failing light. A dear old bridge it is, not pushing straight across from side to side in grudging, hurried fashion, as though its only thought were to get you across the water and have done with you, but striking out a perfectly irresponsible course of its own, half across, half down the stream, which foams and gurgles through its heavy timbers, till one seems almost to be drifting with it down to the mighty Rhine and the far-off sea. It is quite a long walk before we at last reach the opposite shore, almost as much lower down the stream than we started, as though we had been rowing across in an open ferry-boat. And then we came upon the stately family of city swans, each noble couple with its own little house, and its own little carefully-railed-in lake, where grave painted notice boards convey strict warnings against any interference with their proud seclusion. Just opposite is the little theatre, closed now, as in this broiling weather it well may be, and away down the river-banks on either side stretch the tall houses of the quaint old town, crowding close up many of them to the very edge of the water, over which hang here and there heavy old wooden balconies with many-coloured garments hanging out to dry, and casting a quivering reflection on the swift-running water below.

Then we wander back again, and presently a sound of distant music catches our ear, and we follow it till it leads us to the gate of the funny little stony garden in front of the Hungaria Café, at the open gate of which sits the "frau wirthin," at

a little round iron table, briskly collecting the ten-sou pieces that privilege the payers to drink their beer at the score or so of similar little iron tables within, where three or four violins, a flute, a double-bass, and a cornet-à-pistons are discoursing sweet music by the light of three great moderator-lamps, to the flames of which whole hecatombs of gnats and mosquitoes are devoting themselves with an energy of self-sacrifice quite beyond all praise. The music is really not so very bad; the beer, of which Dick, at Mr. Neville's instigation, insists of my sipping nearly a whole "bock," is most deliciously light, clear, and refreshing; the air, though heavy, is pleasant after the broiling day, and though one soon becomes aware that there are mosquitoes about with appetites distressingly sharpened by the approaching rain, the whole thing is really very pleasant, and there is a novelty about it which no doubt adds considerably to its pleasure. It is nearly two o'clock before we finally reach the hotel, and would have been later still had not the rain begun in earnest, sending us flying home at a very different pace from Mr. Neville's ordinary stately Pall Mall lounge.

And when it begins it goes on. As Dick says, quotingly: "It rains all night till the broad daylight, and it doesn't leave off in the morning."

"Wal, Mr. Showman," are the first words I hear as I enter the *salle-à-manger* for breakfast, "and what in thunder are we to do now?" And the adjuration, if not elegant, is at least appropriate, for it is in thunder that whatever we may summon courage to do will assuredly have to be done. Not a regular thunderstorm. For some hours in the early morning we had what Checksuit now irreverently designates as a display of fireworks of a very vivid description, and terribly grand the crashing thunder was as it echoed and re-echoed from mountain-top to mountain-top, all round the gleaming lake. But since six o'clock it seems to have been going on simply because it has got into a way of thundering, and doesn't know how to leave off. The lightning has ceased, or at all events hardly shows in the daylight; though that, under the heavy black canopy that shuts us in and seems to press down upon the very roof-tops, is nothing much to boast of. The thunder, too, no longer comes in peals and crashes that seem to break first just outside your window and then roll majestically away along the lake.

It is now just one long monotonous grumble, that never rises and never falls, but simply rumbles on as though the solid mass of cloud that spreads flatly from hill to hill across the lake were in very truth a mighty granite causeway, across the upper surface of which the Titan artillery was retreating after the fight. As for the rain, that too goes on steadily. Not with the solid rush that a few hours ago lashed the grey surface of the lake into something almost like foam, but with a quiet persistent down-pour.

Now is indeed the time to show the metal of which our "conductor" is made, and nobly he responds to the call. I fancy thunder must be catching. Certainly on more than one of our six-and-forty brows has been hanging all the morning a very fair reflection of the cloud that shrouds the gloomy features of old Pilatus. Already we have begun, as Checksuit hath it, to "snap each other's heads off in the nippingest fashion," and there is very little doubt but that, as he further observes, "if that jolly old shepherd don't start some sort of game in about two twos, there'll be just the bloomingest little row all round." But the shepherd is equal to the occasion. Without the smallest hesitation, and in a perfectly matter-of-course tone, he calmly proposes, amid a little semi-hush of grumbling expectancy, that if it doesn't clear up by luncheon-time we shall wait for it no longer, but just put on our waterproofs and—ascend the Righi.

"The Riggly!"

It is Checksuit's voice which gives articulate expression to the general amazement at this audacious proposition. But the roar of inextinguishable laughter which follows comes with the full power of all but one pair of our whole six-and-forty lungs. The only individual among us who receives it with the same simple gravity with which it has been enunciated, is the citizen with the goatee, and his mode of accepting it throws a new light upon a little incident in Messrs. Gaw's Paris office, which has hitherto dwelt in my memory as a pure piece of Americo-Hibernianism.

"Tyrol, sir? Yes," the clerk was saying, as we entered, to a citizen who might have been the twin-brother of ours. "Beautiful mountain scenery." "Oh! cuss the scenery," was the reply. "Is there anything to see?" Our present citizen puts the same view in a somewhat different form. He does not go

quite the length of "cussing" the scenery, but he some thinks they can fix up slopes enough betwixt Bunker's Hill and the Rocky Mountains without going fooling around Europe at half-a-dollar a hummock. What the citizen wants is to do the regulation shows in the regulation way, and whether they are done in sunshine or in storm, in the light or in the dark, when he himself is awake or fast asleep and snoring, concerns him not a whit. By-and-by the whole party comes one by one round to the citizen's way of thinking; and by the time that Mr. Neville joins us, the thing is settled, and the flock is once more dispersed with rendezvous on board the steamer for a quarter to two o'clock. Personally speaking, it seems to me that we could get wet through quite as cheaply at home; and even Master Dick, when it actually comes to the paying of two-and-twenty shillings for our tickets, purses up his lips with a half-penitent glance at me, as the thought evidently occurs to him that we are already making a hole in our little Paris reserve.

When one-forty-five P.M. arrives, and we all turn up again on the deck of the lake steamer, the gentlemen with umbrellas and with trousers tucked up half way to their knees, the ladies cloaked and hooded like so many witches from Macbeth, it becomes very evident how we have been spending the intermediate time. We have been buying alpenstocks. What is supposed to be the precise part played by this formidable weapon in a mountain ascent performed by railway, I am not prepared to say. But unless the number kept in stock at Lucerne be really very considerable, this morning's work must surely result in a rise in price. Dick makes a rapid little calculation, and estimates that, placed end to end, they would reach all round the ship, with about half-a-dozen to spare. Not a few are already branded with the proud legend "Righi;" all are topped either with a round black nob, or, as is the case with at least four-fifths of them, with a pert little chamois horn, that gives it the air of a sort of compromise between a shepherd's crook and a hat-peg. All are shod with sharp four-sided spikes, with which, as we walk up and down, we punch little dents in the planks, till the whole deck looks like one eloquent protest against neglect of vaccination.

"Great man—shepherd!" remarks Mr. Neville, whose appreciation of what he calls the delicious irresponsibility of the

whole affair seems really to amount to actual enjoyment. "Wonder whether Gawk's people have a commission on alpenstocks."

And then we bend our united mental energies upon a point which has been puzzling me ever since we have been on board. Why is it that everything has such a curious air of being upside down. Mr. Neville suggests that, under the circumstances, a certain amount of topsyturviness would merely be a natural thing to expect; but as a serious solution of the point, this seems to me insufficient, and by degrees we arrive at a more practical conclusion. Commonly speaking, the world, however round it may be, looks, nevertheless, flat; whilst, on the other hand, the sky, no matter how heavy with clouds, always arches over our heads. To-day, with the narrowness of the horizon, with the cutting off of all the lower portion of it by the mountains, and with the sharp contrast afforded by the steep slopes on the top of which it rests, the cloud canopy seems quite flat over our heads; whilst, on the other hand, the sloping sides of the mountain all around us, prolonged in the reflection of the clear water right down under our feet, gives the face of the ground a sort of concave look. So, as far as appearance goes, all the conditions of an ordinary landscape really are reversed, and we have the flat sky above our heads and the arching ground under our feet.

And so we arrive at Vitnau, where we find awaiting us the cruet-stand, with its solitary vinegar-cruet, which I noticed ever so long ago on the frontispiece of Messrs. Gawks's "Tourist," and which now stands confessed as the quaint little engine which is to drag us up among the clouds themselves. And, in the course of time, we insinuate ourselves somehow into our narrow, omnibus-like vehicle, and puff slowly away. The great difficulty is, of course, the alpenstocks. If every passenger in a tightly-packed omnibus at home were to insist upon bringing with him a juvenile leaping-pole a little longer than himself, the chances are that those passengers would have what our American tourist terms "a lively time." Its liveliness would scarcely be diminished by the fact of each pole having a sharp spike at one end and a still sharper hook at the other. The feats that some of us perform might, to quote our American friend again, "have riz the ha'r of a South Sea harpooner." Check-suit alone manages, at one and the same

moment, to drag a false plait right off the head of Miss Lydier with one end of his weapon, and to drill a hole clean through my waterproof with the other. Then, in his horror at this last assault, in face of which poor Miss Lydier's screams seem to make no impression upon his ears, he incontinently proceeds to knock Mr. Newcome's hat out of the window, through which the horned end of his deadly alpenstock forthwith follows it, the captured tail still dangling triumphantly from its hook. We are at Kaltbad before the scrimmage is fairly over, the ravished lock restored, as nearly as may be, to its proper place, and the rampaging Checksuit induced to lay down his death-dealing weapon among the pile of similar superfluities which by this time cumber the floor. As for Mr. Newcome's hat, that proves to have been fastened by a long string to his button-hole; and the little excitement of the incident, with the triumph of subsequently retailing, one by one, to each member of the party the story of his successful escape, positively appears to do him good.

And so we puff and struggle up, up, up, for an hour and a half; and as we go, Mr. Neville, who really seems to have a great deal of artistic taste and cultivation, points out to me all sorts of curious effects of light and shade and colour, such as I myself should never have dreamed of looking for in the sodden panorama that passes greyly by, now dimly seen through the thick wet mist, now altogether obscured by the curling clouds of snowy steam and dark brown smoke that beat down before our windows. And slowly the mist grows denser and denser, till even when the steam and smoke drift momentarily away, nothing is to be seen but here and there a black dripping fir gliding ghost-like by behind its thick grey shroud. And so at last we reach the summit, and while the rest rush in to the hotel to exorcise the demon of damp with a glass of brandy or a cup of hot tea, Mr. Neville, who has of course been here before, draws me aside, not a dozen yards, and lo! hotel and train and all have vanished, and the world has come to an end, and we are standing alone in the grey mist on the grey rock with silence all around.

It is a curious sensation for the moment, especially with the knowledge that there before us, if only the thick grey curtain were rolled away, lies stretched one of the grandest panoramas Europe has to show.

But we have no time for sentimentalising. Ten minutes is the limit of our stay on the mountain-top, and we have but just time to scald our throats with a cup of the curious concoction which on the Continent goes by the name of tea, before we are again breaking our shins and spiking our ankles over the pile of alpenstocks, and zigzagging merrily down through cloud and rain back to our boat again.

The clouds are breaking as we reach Lucerne once more, a little later for dinner than we were yesterday; and when, at the end of it, Mr. Neville carries me off to the quiet old cathedral, with its tiny flower-decked God's acre, and the dear little quaint old cloister running all round it on the top of the massive stone wall, one long, quivering ray comes stealing out through a ragged crevice in the clouds, lighting up the bright blossoms and graceful white crosses and urns, and flooding all the moist, glittering atmosphere with sudden crimson and gold.

By six in the morning we are away again, and it is aggravating to see the clouds already lifting, with unmistakable tokens of being all cleared off just by the time that we shall no longer be here to benefit by their clearing. Some of us actually make a feeble effort to alter the preordained programme, and exchange a day of our appointed time at Interlachen, or Berne, or Chamounix for another here; but the thing is not to be done. Setting aside all question of the six-and-forty beds that have already been bespoken from night to night all along our route, we are not even unanimous in the wish. Checksuit, indeed, has discovered what he describes as the rummiest old beershop he ever saw, with four roofs, like a blessed old clo' man's hats, and a "howling tap" and an equally "ululant young lady" to dispense it. With both of which Checksuit would willingly renew his acquaintance. Manchester, too, appears to have entered upon a course of enquiry at what he calls the "swell" hotels, chiefly, I fancy, with a view of comparing their prices with those of our own more modest establishment. But our American contingent one and all emphatically declare that they are through with Loosurn. They've done the Riggy, and the Garden, and What's his name's meeting-house, and—in short, Lucerne is exhausted, and they are for fresh woods and pastures new. And as the majority of the whole party

appear to agree with them, the little attempt at freedom comes to an end.

The discussion is not exactly sotto voce, nor is it governed by any foolish prejudice as to the number of disputants who shall vouchsafe their opinions simultaneously; whence it seems to awaken a lively interest among the other passengers, some of whom make a study of us through their opera-glasses, as of an amusing natural feature in the scene. One huge individual in white trousers, no waistcoat, very open-neck shirt, and a little alpaca coat ever so many sizes too short for him, who has been carrying on a little private discussion of his own with a burly personage in a short blouse and official-looking kepi, who afterwards turns out to be the conducteur of the Alpnach diligence, actually pulls out his memorandum-book, and smilingly proceeds to take notes. I frown at him in my severest manner, but without the slightest result, except that he fixes his eyes upon the funnel, as though he were making a sketch of that; when suddenly Dick exclaims: "What, Shanks? by Jove!" and, to my intense disgust, seizes the impertinent monster by the arm, and introduces him to me as one of the special correspondents of his own paper. "Useful fellow to travel with," explains Dick presently, when the audacious note-taker has moved away again. "Knows all the ropes, swears fluently in seven languages—never heard him myself, you know, but they say so—speaks French like a native—" "Of France?" queries Mr. Neville, who seems to be of my mind regarding Mr. Shanks. Well, not exactly of France, perhaps, Dick admits. Sort of general native, you know. Generally taken for a German in France, and a Spaniard in Germany, and so on. Says he don't much care what he's taken for himself, so long as it's not an Englishman, or a Yank—American."

"And why not an Amurrican, sir?" asks the citizen in the goatee.

"Says he can't afford it. Has to pay English prices." And Dick, who considers that he has now done his duty by general society, returns to his post beside Miss Nellie.

But he has given Manchester an idea. Here is evidently an economical authority of the highest class, and Mr. Shanks is forthwith pounced upon with a request for his views as to the financial aspect of our own present arrangement.

Mr. Shanks smiles. Cheap? Well,

that depends, you know. Twenty-two pounds ten shillings, eh? Well, let us see; and Mr. Shanks dives into the little canvas satchel that hangs over his shoulder, and consults sundry little documents for a half minute or so. Whence he arrives at the conclusion that our fares will be somewhere about ten guineas each, which leaves twelve pounds, you know, for hotel accommodation. "Hotel accommodation ceases with arrival in Paris?" Just so. Not much hotel accommodation though between Paris and Geneva, so let us say hotel accommodation ceases at Geneva. Sunday to Tuesday fortnight, sixteen days, with one night spent on the rail, say fifteen shillings a day, without wine and so forth, or first breakfast. Altogether, Mr. Shanks estimates, as nearly a pound a day for hotel accommodation as you can well put it. And what does Mr. Shanks reckon to do it for himself? Mr. Shanks smiles again, dives once more into the little canvas bag, and hands over for inspection his day's bill at Lucerne.

"Monsieur Numéro Quatre. Logement, un franc cinquante centimes; dîner, deux francs trente centimes; bouteille Yvorne, deux francs; café complet, quatre-vingt centimes: somme, six francs soixante centimes."

Five and sixpence! Phew! Checksuit's whistle would do credit to a railway engine. Manchester shows that however it may be with Mr. Shanks, he himself can "swear fluently" in one language at all events. We are all of us a little agast; some going even so far as to wish that Mr. Shanks was—well, at the other end of the lake, or, at all events, had kept his economical information to himself. We have not quite recovered our equanimity by the time we have reached Alpnach; Manchester in especial being so deep in a calculation of the unnecessary outlay thus incurred during the journey, that he quite forgets to join in the rush for places, and so lays in a fresh grievance to keep the other warm. We do not scramble either. Mr. Shanks, it appears, is really of some use, and has arranged all that for us with his friend the conductor, much to our profit in the matter both of dust and of elbow room. So I forgive him his indiscreet confidences on the head of expenses, and am really almost sorry when a little beyond the top of the pass he drops suddenly from the seat on the box, out of which he has apparently cajoled his friend the conductor, and after a brief colloquy

with the "team" of a droll little "one-man-waggon," which is labouring along with an enormous load of hay, jerks his battered leather knapsack on to the top of the load, and strikes off in the direction of Meyringen.

Our own road lies towards Brienz, and a very pretty road it is. All up the long steep hill to the top of the pass we—or most of us—walk, leaving the lumbering diligences far behind, and feeling in the brisk mountain air as though we could go walking on for any number of hours without any notion of fatigue. By-and-by we come to the curious Lungern Lake, where an ingenious tunnel has been punched through the steep hill-side, fifty feet or more below the original level of the water, which runs off through it into the deeper valley below, leaving the old water-mark still quite plainly traced along the banks. Then we stop at a little wayside inn to lunch. Then on again, up, up, up, fresher and friskier than ever; Master Dick and Miss Nellie in especial, not content with keeping to the road, dashing off at every hundred yards or so, at what Mr. Neville calls a tangent, into the woods on either side in search of wild flowers, with which they finally so cram the rather stuffy carriage, that poor Mrs. Crumpehorn, who finds a little mountaineering on foot go rather a long way, sits in it up to her chin, like a rather full-blown Flora, in a perfect bower of short-lived fragrance. And then, at last, we reach the top of the pass; and the road, steeper than ever, winds sharply backwards and forwards, round corners so sharp, that it seems impossible we can ever turn them; under great overhanging rocks, against which the top of the diligence seems to scrape without any reckoning of baggage or outside passengers; along the edge of sheer descents, where the road we are to travel half an hour hence stretches beneath us like a narrow white ribbon, upon which we could surely drop a pebble from our window as we go. And all the way the whip is cracking, and the bells jingling, and the five great grey horses kicking, squealing, biting at each other in clumsy play as they dash along, two trotting, three galloping, at a pace which certainly promises to bring our journey speedily to an end, if only by grace of a short cut down the face of the mountain. Shall I be writing myself down a terrible coward, if I confess that I gasp a little here and there, and that, despite the marvellous beauty

of the road, I do feel just a little relieved when we find ourselves once more safe on level ground, and pull up panting and foaming at the inn-door at Brienz?

MYNHEER AT THE SEASIDE.

MYNHEER—deeply belied and misunderstood Mynheer—may be studied to great advantage by the seaside. For that matter he may be studied to advantage anywhere. Perhaps he has changed since he was dubbed by a great authority, a “swag-bellied Hollander;” and, by a less acute judge of humankind, typified as “Mynheer Van Dunck,” addicted to potent draughts “deep as the rolling Zuyder Zee.” For the matter of that the Zuyder Zee is not very deep, being infested with shallows which render its navigation passing difficult. But this is ever the way with poets, great and small; they want a striking image, and construct one in that peculiar lens known as “the poet’s eye,” possessing the faculty of showing things not as they are, but as the poet chooses them to be.

Mynheer is a particularly ill-treated person. His courage, proved in a thousand fights by sea and land, has been by unappreciative Englishmen attributed to the artificial aid of strong drink; and he has—thanks somewhat to the taste of native artists in depicting scenes of low life—come to be regarded as a soddened tippler of the most degraded variety. How far this mythical Hollander is from the genuine Mynheer can be discovered by a few days’ residence in one of the most interesting countries in the world.

Having seen and understood Mynheer at home, I thought a few weeks ago of seeing what he did when out for a holiday at the seaside, in quest of change of scene, and the invigorating effect of sea air and sea-bathing. To that end I betook myself to the village of Scheveningen, hard by the Hague, and memorable in English history as the spot whence Charles Stuart the younger took shipping to return to England, and bestow upon this favoured country the blessings of his reign. Saving this remarkable event, I can think of nothing special concerning Scheveningen, its individuality being swallowed up in that of the city of which it is as a kind of marine suburb. There is, indeed, a story told by the excellent Chevalier de Seingalt, setting forth how that vain and not very scrupulous Venetian quar-

relled with a young Frenchman at the Hague, and then walked out in the direction of Scheveningen, through the famous wood now traversed by the vehicles of the Haagsche Tramway. According to his own account, Casanova met his opponent with a certain “botte,” which never failed, and touched him handsomely, not too deeply, on the right breast. There are no duels now in the delightfully shady avenue which extends from the Hague to the sandhills, the paths being thronged with promenaders, and the roadway occupied by the tramcars aforesaid. Within as little as a dozen years a mighty change has come over Scheveningen. When first I knew it there were no tramcars there, and visitors from the Hague had but four courses open to them. They could walk, ride, drive, or travel in the “trekschuyt” along the canal, a specially Dutch and easy-going method. Now there is a car every few minutes—there are, in fact, two sets of cars, one by the wood and one by the canal—and the trekschuyt has become glorified into a gondel—which I take to be the Hollandish equivalent for gondola. As the road and the modes of getting over it have changed, so has the village itself. Once a genuine fishing village of respectable size, it budded towards the sea in small houses of entertainment, and the bathing-machines were few in number and rude in construction. Outside the native grogshops, holiday-makers might occasionally be seen drinking minute quantities of Geneva, as they are pleased to call the very good liquor made at Schiedam, and various strange concoctions generically termed bitters. Beyond the village stretched on either hand interminable sandhills, and nothing else; in front the strand and the sea. Scheveningen was doubtless a health-giving, but hardly an hilarious spot. It was utterly given over to the monotony of desolation.

The first change was wrought by the late Queen of the Netherlands, who built a marine villa to the northward of the village. The seal of fashion having thus been set upon Scheveningen, it began at once to enter upon a new phase of existence. As became a rising watering-place, it put forth an hotel of only moderate dimensions at first—soon to be succeeded by a larger structure—destined to bloom into an établissement or Badhuis. No sooner was this big hotel opened than others started, pushing still northward toward the interminable sandhills. On the

very edge of the wilderness now stands the new Hôtel d'Orange, the abode of the fashionable and exclusive, and a very comfortable abode it is.

In approaching Scheveningen from the Hague, it is impossible to catch the slightest glimpse of the sea, effectually masked as it is by the dunes or sandhills, thrown up by the tide, and blown together and apart by the wind. Here and there may be seen a sandhill, with such pretension to solidity as is supplied by a few tufts of long coarse grass, and a sprig of wild thyme, or of stiff wild ranunculus. In the shady nooks a few blackberries may be gathered, but the bramble is the nearest approach to a tree that Scheveningen can boast of. One wonders where the sea is until a room is secured on the sea front of the hotel by paying fifty per cent. more than for one looking on the sandhills; then there is a prospect indeed of the great North Sea, unbroken by island or promontory, a vast semicircle of ocean, many-hued as the rainbow, variable in its moods as the sea-daughter herself. As the sun pours down on the vast expanse of water, fringed only on the hither side by sand, the eye is attracted at once by the deep amaranthine bands near the horizon, and the thousand shades of azure, like those seen in a deep thick-ribbed glacier when the light is shining through it. Nowhere can the sea be seen to greater advantage, save on the shores of the Atlantic. And there is nothing to distract the attention from the sea but the sand, mile after mile of sand, so delightfully impalpable that the wind plays strange tricks with it, whirling it aloft like dust, wreathing it like snowdrifts against the villas and hotels built just above high-water mark. At early morning may be seen the diligent Dutchman, busy with spade and wheelbarrow, removing the sanddrifts from the promenade which they threaten at times to overwhelm. On this arid picture of sand and "steaming salt" pours down the July sun in all its might. It is possible that the heat would at times be unbearable, were it not for the wind which blows eternally at Scheveningen. With the sea stretching westward to Yarmouth, and northward to the Pole, and nothing loftier than the sandhills of Frisia, the rolling Zuyder Zee, and the Vijverberg, at the Hague, to the east, there is fair play for every wind, but one direct from the south; and even that must traverse the snowhills of Switzerland and the range of the Vosges,

before hurrying over the Belgian flats to Scheveningen. There is therefore great freshness about this fashionable strip of seashore. The four winds of heaven dance a merry-go-round on the sands, and waltz round the dunes, till those unsteady hillocks lose all consciousness of form and outline, and put on fresh guise from day to day.

Having thus defined the natural objects of Scheveningen to be sea, sand, sky, sun, wind, and nothing else beyond a few potatoes, blackberries, and a fishing population, I would fain proceed to depict the Ineffable Transparencies who have made the old Dutch village what it is, but that I fear all that can be said about the Ineffables has been said already. I may, however, add that the Dutch Ineffable, the Countess Clara Veer Vander Veer, is admirably suited to that limited comprehension which Providence has vouchsafed to the inhabitants of this country. Clara Veer Vander Veer is the most proper and correct of all countesses. Despite the libellous pictures of Jordaens, Mieris, and other jokers of the same type, she by no means condescends to sit upon the knee of Vander Veer while he smokes a long clay pipe and tipples prime Rhenish out of a glass of marvellous altitude and thinness. Vander Veer himself is a quiet gentleman, courteous and unobtrusive, setting great store by a tall stove-pipe hat in which he delights to array himself. I have nothing to say against the stove-pipe hat in cities, but I must own that I could never quite understand why a New York pilot aboard of his craft, a Yankee skipper on the high seas, and a Hollander at the seaside, should insist on wearing it. In the hunting-field it has certain advantages, but aboard ship, and at the seaside, in a high wind, it seems to my ill-regulated mind out of place. Vander Veer, however, thinks it incumbent on him to don it after table d'hôte, and to accompany it with a very shiny frock-coat, to the end that he may enjoy the music, on the promenade outside the Badhuis, in proper and becoming costume. The subject of morning and evening dress on the Continent has, I must confess, ever proved to me a stumbling-block and cause of offence. In England the course is clear. In cities we wear ordinary morning dress till dinner, and in the country what we like up to that hour, and then always don the orthodox white choker and the odd but convenient garment known variously as a swallow-tail, steel-pen, or claw-hammer. In France the rule is much

the same, save that visits are paid in the swallow-tail and the dove-coloured continuations, which, under certain circumstances, also pass muster at dinner. I know these rules, but in Holland and Germany am all abroad. One night there was great bustle at Scheveningen on account of a concert to be given in the Wood of the Hague by a certain Société Littéraire. Pending dinner at Scheveningen I held council with my friend Mr. Tattenham as to the costume to be worn at an open-air concert. Knowing the punctilious nature of Dutchmen, I inferred that ordinary evening-dress would be appropriate; while he maintained, that as we came from the seaside to an open-air concert, at which beer was consumed, we should go in serge suits, shooting-helmets, and puggrees, quite sans façon. After a prolonged discussion, enlivened by various kinds of bitters, we decided that each should dress in his own way, and that the approving or contemptuous glances of the public should be taken as evidence of success or failure. Wherefore we set out: I in ordinary evening dress; Mr. Tattenham in a blue serge costume, puggree, and all. My mind misgave me as the tram made its way through the leafy avenue leading to the Hague. I observed that the astonishment of the natives was divided between my enormous shirt-front and my companion's puggree. They obviously did not like that apple of mine eye, my silken Gibus; but they revolted against the mongrel kind of helmet, with the oriental appendage streaming in the wind. Our fellow-travellers, keenly awake to the fact that we were strangers, and deducing therefrom that we were ignorant of the language of Holland, discussed our appearance freely in our very presence. I do not by this signify that the Vander Veers did so. That distinguished family had driven off some time since in their own carriage, and were already at the Société Littéraire, partaking of either beer or tea. The passengers in the Haagsche Tramway car were of the meaner sort, ranging from merchants to bonnes. The latter, good souls, enjoyed the prospect of us very much. With a critical eye they scanned my heart-shaped shirt-front, and while approving of the manner in which my laundress had got it up, demurred to its amplitude. They dubbed me the "Man with the shirt;" my companion, the "Man with the hat." At his hat they never ceased to marvel, appearing quite unable

to grasp the *raison d'être* of a parti-coloured towel tied round a mongrel kind of pickelhaube. Wild conjectures were hazarded as to his nationality. Me they booked at once as an Englishman; but he baffled conjecture. One damsel, quite unconscious that her own appearance in a stiffly-starched cap, with golden things like dragon-flies in front of each ear, was at all remarkable, put Mr. Tattenham down as a Scot; but another, with a significant glance at his lower limbs, encased in ample blue serge, declared that that could not be, and that the interesting stranger was an Indian. I don't know whether it is a sign that we are specially fitted to fill a prominent part in the world; but I am quite within the truth, when I assert that my companion and myself were not only not abashed, but vastly amused, at the rigid scrutiny to which we were subjected. But this was nothing to what awaited us at the home of literature and beer in the Wood of the Hague. It seemed, at one time, as if the music—excellent of its kind, as it was—were quite playing second fiddle to my friend's puggree. Again I must reiterate, not with the grown-up people, who enjoyed their tea-garden kind of amusement soberly and discreetly, but from the children, whose amazement and curiosity could not be repressed. They stared out of their bright eyes till they could stare no longer, and then went and fetched their companions to look upon us. The puggree afforded them vast wonder and delight. They viewed it in front, and at the side. They followed us, and ran round us. Youngsters of tender years actually left off eating cakes and sweetstuff, and came away from the tea-table to have a comfortable stare at us, so wondrous did we seem unto them; and they took it unkindly that, at last, satiated with unsought popularity, we sought refuge in the inner pavilion of literature and beer, into which children ventured not. Here we refreshed ourselves with mighty glasses of *Bairisch*, and speculated on the intense love of tea with which Dutch women are possessed. Tea in Holland is, like almost everything but water, of excellent quality, and is not converted into a beverage by the proprietors of tea-gardens. Everybody makes her own tea at the Hague and Amsterdam, and eke at Scheveningen. When Mynheer and his family have taken their seats at one of the green tables closely packed under the trees round

the orchestra, madame proceeds to make tea in the national machine known as a "theestooft." This is very unlike the English urn and teapot, and equally dissimilar from the Russian samovar. The careful waiter brings first what appears to be an iron pail, but is in reality a stove of primitive construction, bottomed well with charcoal. On this is set the kettle of common life, boiling, and kept boiling by the charcoal underneath. Tea is brought in a caddy adapted to the size of the party, and a black earthenware teapot. Madame proceeds to make tea, first ascertaining that the water boils, and when the first round is poured out, removes the lid of the kettle, and puts the little black teapot in its place. There is clearly an understanding between the coppersmith and the potter as to the size of teapots and kettle-lids, for the fit seems exact, and the tea is kept hot, as it needs to be in the open-air. Thus, after the manner of the nursery rhyme, the fire begins to boil the kettle, the kettle begins to warm the pot, the pot begins to make the tea, and the tea, presumably, begins to warm its drinkers, for they seem happy enough in a quiet, self-contained way. They are not listless, these Dutch drinkers of tea (shade of Van Dunck!), but they cannot be pronounced festive. Evidently they are contented folk, well-off in the world's goods, and careful of them. There are no peals of laughter, no flashing gestures, no demonstrativeness of any kind, and yet these Dutch folk are not sad. They are "gentle, yet not dull," happy, yet not boisterous—perhaps, nicely-modulated cheerfulness is the best term by which to indicate their mental condition. Chatting quietly they advance to more and more cups of tea, made fresh and fresh by the lady presiding, far too good a housewife to have lavished her store of tea on the first brewing. She appeals to the caddy and the ever-boiling kettle, and brews interminable tea of excellent strength and flavour. The old leaves are not kept stewing till they grow bitter, but are thrown away to make room for a fresh supply. What is the burden of the conversation of these good Dutch burghesses? First, the music, spoken of with knowledge and discretion; secondly, the state of things on the "Beurs" at Amsterdam; thirdly, the shortcomings of the King of the Netherlands and of his son, contemptuously dubbed "Citron" by the sublime dandies of the Parisian Jockey Club, who look down upon

him with the scorn of the *viveur par sang* for him who sins in bad form. Yet "Citron" is of illustrious birth—how illustrious is known to few of his father's subjects. I did not ask Vander Veer any questions touching the family of Orange-Nassau, who have done some great and some shabby things, the great predominating, in their time; but I have oftentimes asked ordinary Mynheer—Mynheer of the railway-carriage, Mynheer of the table d'hôte—in the tone of an intelligent but ill-informed foreigner, where Orange was? Mynheer has generally given up the conundrum, but now and then has attempted to bring me to grief by mixing Orange with Nassau. This would not do. I returned to the charge. "But Orange, why Orange?" One Mynheer—who sat on my right at the Hôtel d'Orange table d'hôte, and ate more *vol-au-vent à la Toulouse* than I thought mortal man could contain, besides soup, fish, cutlets, and chicken with salad, and stewed fruit, eaten together, devoured a legion of sweet cakes—essayed an explanation to the effect that orange-coloured scarves were worn by the retainers of Nassau-Orange, and was thunderstruck when I asked if there were not a Principality of Orange somewhere on the face of the earth. Replete Mynheer put this down at once as a romance, until I told him that I had been there, so far as passing through a railway-station would count; but this went for little with positive Mynheer, who declared that it could not be the right Orange. Poor Mynheer, he went away to the Hague—he was only a casual—and had a bad night of it, if there be any truth in the rules my physician lays down for my guidance. When I think of the treble portion of everything he devoured; how he, with the assistance of a diamond-decked *harridan* with him, seized the whole of the thin part of a magnificent salmon, defrauding me thereby of the only edible thing I really care for, and of the way in which this precious pair cleared the dish of *pourpiers*, I shudder with rage and scorn. By-the-way, why have we no *pourpiers*—"purslane," I take it—in England? It is a delightfully subacid vegetable, delicious in hot weather, not altogether unlike sorrel, but sharper and more pleasant to the taste.

Of the manner of life at Scheveningen there is little to tell. We rise, not too early, and descend to what is called coffee, not breakfast—a species of compromise between the French cup of coffee or chocolate and the English breakfast—including

the consumption of a couple of exquisitely fresh eggs. Shortly after this the London daily papers—of yesterday—come in, and *The Indépendance Belge*, *The Courrier de Schéveningue*, *The Moniteur des Bains*, and so forth; and, the sun being up, there is a choice of four amusements. One of these is a ride in the car to the Hague, to gaze once more on Paul Potter's beautiful "Jonge Stier"—i.e. bull-calf, not bull, as Englishmen ridiculously call it—and the marvellous "Lesson in Anatomy," by Rembrandt. These, however, are only two among a thousand pictures worth seeing in the public and private collections at the Hague. The second sport is to wander over the sandhills, till one is as tired as with walking over soft snow at a steep elevation. It is curious to note how quickly all sense of locality is lost among the dunes. One is so like the other that, like our South Downs—the hills, not the sheep—they bewilder the pedestrian consumedly. There is everywhere the same loose sand, the same tufts of harsh grass—which bears the same relation to ordinary herbage that a Chinaman's back hair does to that of a blonde Mädchen—the same sky, the same tufts of wild thyme. The sea is completely shut from view, and the only sign of life is in the multitudinous butterflies, and a rabbit ever and anon starting up and making for his burrow. The third amusement is to walk into the village of Scheveningen, past the boats and their attendant fisher-folk. Without doubt the village is interesting in its way, and the costumes of the natives are droll. Dutch fishermen love not blue in their raiment, and rejoice to clothe themselves from head to foot in a kind of thick duffel, absolutely black in hue, giving them the air of sweeps who have run away to sea. Scheveningen damsels array themselves like unto Solomon in his glory, so far as their lights will enable them. Eschewing the adhesive raiment beloved by Clara Veer Vander Veer, the Scheveningen vrouw displays an amplitude of petticoat recalling the best days of the Second Empire, and a tight-fitting bodice completes her costume—saving the winged headdress already described. It is not absolutely necessary to walk into the village to observe the costumes, as the better-favoured damsels often appear on the promenade in the evening, to the great strengthening of local colour in the eyes of all save Mr. Tattenham, who declares that they are paid to do it. The

same eminent authority insists that there is something wrong about Holland, and that it is not like the pictures—not according to sample. Five several times did he drag me to Scheveningen proper to see "boors regaling." He urged that they must regale at some time or other. It was in all the pictures. Teniers, Ostade, Brauwer, all agreed upon this point, that the boor regaled, and he was bound to keep up the character. But he didn't. We did not see anybody regale at all, and in despair took to the fourth amusement of the place. This consists in hiring a chair—a vast chair of wickerwork, made in the shape of a porter's chair—and sitting in it on the sand as near the edge of the sea as might be. With a little management, such as turning their backs to the sun, these chairs may be made to provide a grateful shelter against sun and wind. They are single and double, the latter being greatly in request by very young people, and are provided with a footstool; so that they are very comfortable for reading, knitting, smoking, or sleeping in. They have extended down the coast as far as Ostend, where, however, they are not in great request. Probably the same reason which has prevented their adoption at Ostend has stood in their way in this country. They have every virtue, it is true; but they not only shelter but conceal the occupant. What I should like to know is, the use of a delicious seaside toilette if madame is to be buried in the vast arms of a porter's chair? What becomes of the killing costume and the scarlet umbrella if they are literally put under a bushel? I am sure neither Ameliarann, nor Mary Jane, nor 'Arry, would like the Dutch chairs, but the peaceful Hollanders—who know not these folk, and who would shudder at them if they did—enjoy their bask on the sands very much; surrounded, as they mostly are, by numerous children and dogs. I wonder whether my reader ever saw a Dutch baby, and watched, as I have, its preternatural gravity and grown-up demeanour. Dutch children make their sand bastions and trenches like other little ones, but always in a sober, quiet, business-like way, and with an air which implies, "I am very little now. I know I am, and you think I am young; but I have lived before. Bless your insular soul, I was present in the great square at Brussels when Egmont and Hoorn lost their heads.

I mind me well of the assassin's shot that slew William the Taciturn, and of the treachery of Maurice of Nassau towards the Grand Pensionary. I——"

It is sleepy work, after all, sitting in a portable wicker verandah, and I am very glad that friendly dog woke me up. There are dogs in abundance on Scheveningen sands, and the Dutch dog is as peculiar in his way as a Dutch baby. It does not matter what breed he may be of, he is obliged to put on a certain outward appearance. If he is not born a poodle, he must get himself made as near unto a poodle as may be. Scotch terriers, Maltese, and even Pomeranians, are all cropped and docked, cut and combed, trimmed and clipped, to the regulation leonine outline. It is true that a Pomeranian, with his lovely fox face and his poor hind-quarters shaven, and his tail tufted, to look like a poodle, is a forlorn and pitiable object—more absurd even than a Scotch terrier similarly martyred. But there is a great deal of this kind of thing in other walks of life, and among the so-called superior animals.

STRANGE BURIAL ORDERS.

NUMEROUS cases have been recorded of eccentric personages, who have exhibited their oddity of character even in the arrangements for the final disposition of their remains. The obituary of *The Gentleman's Magazine* for 1733 contains an account of the funeral of Mr. John Underwood, of Whittlesea, in Cambridgeshire. When the burial service was over an arch was turned over the coffin, in which was placed a small piece of white marble with this inscription:

NON OMNIS MORIAR. 1733.

The six gentlemen who followed him to the grave sang the last stanza of the Second Book of Horace. No bell was tolled, none but the six gentlemen invited to the funeral (and no relation) followed the corpse. The coffin was painted green, and the deceased lay in it with all his clothes on. Under his head was placed Sanadon's Horace; at his feet, Bentley's Milton; in his right hand a small Greek Testament, inscribed in gold letters:

EIMI EN TO STAYΩ, J.U.;

in his left hand a miniature edition of Horace, lettered

MVSISAMINS. J.U.;

and Bentley's Horace under his back. After the ceremony was over they went back to his house, where his sister had provided a cold supper. After the cloth was taken away, the gentlemen sang the Thirty-first Ode of the First Book of Horace, drank a cheerful glass, and went home about eight in the evening. Mr. Underwood left nearly six thousand pounds to his sister, on condition of her observing this his will, ordering her to give each of the gentlemen ten guineas. He also specially desired they would not come in black clothes. The will ended thus: "Which done I would have them drink a cheerful glass, and think no more of John Underwood." From the same magazine we find that, on February 5th, 1751, were interred at Stevenage, in Hertfordshire, the coffin and remains of a farmer of that place, who died February 1st, 1721. He ordered by will that his estate, which was four hundred pounds a year, should be enjoyed by his two brothers, who were clergymen, and if they should die, by his nephew, till the expiration of thirty years, when he supposed he should return to life, and then it was to revert to him. He also ordered his coffin to be placed on a beam in the barn, locked, and the key enclosed, in order that he might let himself out. The brothers carried out his strange request, allowing him to remain in the barn four days longer than the specified time, when they interred him.

From the *Beauties of England and Wales*, 1801, vol. ii. p. 367, we glean our next instance. Mr. Tilly, once the owner of Pentilly House, near Cotehele, Cornwall, was a celebrated atheist of the last age. He had by rote all the ribald jests against religion and Scripture, but the brilliancy of his wit carried him a degree farther than is commonly met with in the annals of profaneness. In ridicule of the resurrection, he directed his executors to place his dead body in his usual garb, and in his elbow-chair, upon the top of a hill; and to arrange on a table before him bottles, glasses, pipes, and tobacco. In this situation he ordered himself to be immured in a tower, the dimensions of which he prescribed; where he proposed, he said, patiently to await the event. All this was done, and for many years the tower enclosing its tenant remained as a monument of his impiety. The country were wont to shudder as they passed.

The fear-struck hind with superstitious gaze,
Trembling and pale the unhallowed tomb surveys;
And half expected, while fear chill'd his breast,
To see the spectre of its impious guest.

In a Manchester museum is the mummy of a lady in a glass case, labelled "The Mummy of Miss Beswick." It is highly probable that this is the one referred to by Thomas de Quincey in his *Autobiographic Sketches*, Works, 1863, vol. xiv. p. 433. He says it was then in the possession of Mr. Charles White, F.R.S., an eminent Manchester surgeon, and describes it as "that of a lady who had been attended medically for some years by Mr. White, and had owed much alleviation of her sufferings to his inventive skill. She had therefore felt herself called upon to memorialise her gratitude by a very large bequest—not less, I have heard, than twenty-five thousand pounds, but with the condition annexed to the gift, that she should be embalmed as perfectly as the resources of the art in London and Paris could accomplish; and that once a year Mr. White, accompanied by two witnesses of credit, should withdraw the veil from her face. The lady was placed in a common English clock-case, having the usual glass face."

At the death of Mr. White in 1813, the greater part of his anatomical collection was presented to the museum of the Manchester Lying-in Hospital by his son. In 1783, the remains of Margaret, wife of Richard Coosins, of Gravesend, were deposited under a mural monument above ground in Caxton Church, Kent. In the monument was fitted a glass door, covered with a green curtain, and having a lock and key. The coffin, which is a mahogany one, rests upon trestles, and the lid is not nailed down. The lid and all round the coffin is elaborately ornamented, and the lady was buried in a costly dress of scarlet satin. A similar case is noticed by Brewer in his *London and Middlesex*, vol. iv. 1816. In a small apartment leading to the gallery at the west end of the parish church of Staines, are two unburied coffins containing human remains. They are covered with crimson velvet, and richly embellished, placed side by side on tressles; they severally contain all that is mortal of Jessie, the wife of Frederick Campbell, Esq., who died 1812, and of Henry Caulfield, Esq., who died 1808.

An eccentric character, named Pilkington, but better known in the neighbourhood as Squire Hawley, was buried a few years ago at Hatfield, near Doncaster, in his own garden, amid the graves of his rinderpest-stricken cattle. He was laid out in full hunting costume, including spurs and whip; and was placed in a stone

coffin weighing upwards of a ton, which had to be lowered into the grave by means of a crane. His old pony was shot, and buried at his feet, and at his head were entombed the bodies of his favourite dog and an old fox. The deceased left the whole of his estate to his groom, John Vickers, on condition that the funeral arrangements were carried out according to his expressed wish. Should he fail to fulfil every detail, the property was to go to the priest of Doncaster, for the benefit of the Roman Catholic religion.

On March 24th, 1837, there died at Primrose Cottage, High Wycombe, Bucks, Mr. John Guy, aged sixty-four. His remains were interred in a brick grave in the Hughenden churchyard; on a marble slab on the lid of the coffin is inscribed: "Here without nail or shroud, doth lie, or covered with a pall, John Guy. Born May 17th, 1773; died May 24th, 1837." On his grave-stone are the following lines:

In coffin made without a nail,
Without a shroud his limbs to hide;
For what can pomp or show avail,
Or velvet pall to swell the pride.

Mr. Guy was possessed of considerable property, and was a native of Gloucestershire. His grave and coffin were made under his own direction more than a twelvemonth previous to his death; he wrote the inscriptions himself; gave the orders for his funeral; and wrapped in separate pieces of paper five shillings for each of the bearers. The coffin was very neatly made, and looked more like a piece of cabinet work for the drawing-room, than a receptacle for the dead.

Misers have on more than one occasion carried their characteristic penury into the arrangements for their interment. Edward Nokes, of Hornchurch, was buried in the following curious manner: A short time before his death, which he hastened by excessive indulgence in ardent spirits, he gave strict charge that his coffin should not have a nail in it, which order was actually carried into effect, the lid being made fast with hinges of cord; instead of going to the expense of a coffin-plate, the initials E. N. were cut in the wood of the lid. His shroud was made of a pound of wool. To avoid having to hire a pall, the coffin was covered with a sheet, and was carried by six men, to each of whom, according to the directions of the deceased, was given half-a-crown. Also, by his particular desire, no one who followed him to the grave was attired in mourning. The

undertaker had on a scarlet waistcoat and blue coat.

Another case was that of Thomas Pitt, a Warwickshire miser. It is said that some weeks previous to the sickness which terminated his despicable career, he went to several undertakers in quest of a cheap coffin. Yet at his death he left three thousand four hundred and seventy-five pounds in the public funds.

AN ISLAND PRINCESS.

BY THEO. GIFT.

A STORY IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER VI.

WAS he sorry, or only angry with her? Asking himself the question over and over again in his tiny cabin on board the Parnassus, Keith could not answer yea or nay. All he knew was that it had been for her own sake and to spare her from doing a foolish thing that he had spoken; and that she had dismissed him the house in consequence. "Never to speak to her again!" How had he spoken to merit such a sentence? He had lost his temper, he remembered that, but her childish wilfulness had provoked him; and now she had forbidden him to address her again. Did she really mean it? No answer to this question either; and yet how it tormented him! He was dismissed, while Swanage had gone in with his flowers: Swanage who was his inferior, and who had dared to insult her! Well, that was woman's justice all the world over, and what did it matter after all? He was much happier away from them.

Nevertheless, on the third day of his exile, he could bear the sting of it no longer; and taking his pride in both hands, walked up to Mr. Coniston's house, and asked if the young mistress of it were at home. The servant told him no, neither she nor her father. The latter was down at Government House on business, and Miss Jean had gone out riding about ten minutes before. With a party? No, all by herself, and Diego, the stableman, had told her that Brown Jenny had a cold and was better in the paddock; but Miss Jean said her head ached, and that she wouldn't take the mare far. She was only going to the White Rocks, and the little ride would do her good. The White Rocks were a favourite haunt of Miss Jean's, the old woman added; perhaps Mr. Fenwick knew them? Keith did know them; knew the other fact as well; for Jean had confided it to him, and had introduced him

to the place in one of their rare spells of amicable ness. He said nothing, however, but that he was sorry to have missed her, and going straight to an inn hard by, hired a horse, and rode slowly out of the settlement.

Where was he going? After her? And why? Had she not treated him with contempt, and bade him never come near her again; and was he, Keith Fenwick, going to bow his head to such treatment from a wild little girl of the colonies? He told himself no, most decidedly not; and yet he rode on, never swerving or turning to the right or left, with his brain in a whirl, and his pulses throbbing as they had never throbbed yet, till he came in sight of the White Rocks.

They stood up, a great pile of granite, a hundred feet above a little sandy beach, washed by the foaming waves of the South Atlantic, and approached from above by a long expanse of flat, broken country, across which he was riding, and which was covered with patches of fern, fast turning to bronze and ruddy gold under the turquoise blue of a midsummer's sky. Except the amphitheatre of hills closing in three sides of the horizon, there was not another object to break the view; not a house or spire or shrub; not another human being; only the wide brown plain, dotted in the distance with a drove of the half-wild island cattle, with the broad blue sea beyond; and these rocks standing up at the edge of the cliffs about twenty feet high on the island side. Coming nearer them he saw something else as well: a horse, saddled, but without any rider, feeding quietly under their shadow.

She was there then, though he could not see her; and at first his impulse was to turn his horse's head and ride past without stopping. God knows it would have been better for him, better for both, if he had done so. What should he stop for? What was she to him? But then something in her face, some look in her sweet, liquid, proud, brown eyes, as she had turned them on him that evening at her father's gate, came back to him, and he rode on doggedly.

"Surely the islands are not hers," he said to himself. "She showed me the place herself. Why shouldn't I visit it again whether she be there or not? She can turn me out of her own house, of course; but here, in these wilds—" and yet he knew that Jean's own drawing-room was not more sacred to her than this place where he was going to seek her; and felt

a sort of wrath and scorn at himself as he said it. A narrow cleft in the rocks he was nearing led to it. You passed through, expecting to find yourself on the edge of a perpendicular cliff, and, instead, saw a narrow path like a flight of natural steps very steep and slippery, leading down to a flat table-like ledge about thirty feet long by twelve wide, carpeted with thick short grass, shut in on three sides by the face of the cliff, and terminating in a precipice against which in winter the wild fury of the waves used to break with volumes of spray and a sound of mighty thunder, flecking the nest above with flakes of cream white foam.

Jean called this place "her summer parlour;" and, indeed, if you did not mind a roof formed by God's own sky, and a window extending along all one side and looking out on nothing but the blue limitless ocean, with one long spur of snow-white cliffs backed by a dark mountain range running out to the eastward, a pleasanter parlour could hardly be found. The sea-gulls swept above it, tossing their sharp white wings in circling curves, or swooped down, dart-like, as the glittering body of some fish rose to the surface of the waves below. Far overhead the huge vulture soared, a dark blot in the summer sky, a darker shadow on the gay green grass below; and in the most sheltered corner under the rocks half lay, half sat, Jean Coniston, cast carelessly on the ground, her arms resting on a fragment of moss-grown stone, and her small dark head laid upon them. She was so still, so motionless, that at first Keith fancied she was sleeping, and hesitated, with a natural impulse of delicacy, about breaking on her slumbers; but then something—was it a desolate, sorrowful air in the recumbent lines of that little lonely figure?—made him change his mind, sending all the blood in his body to his heart in a hot rush, and he came down the rocky staircase with swiftly determined steps. There was no going back now.

Jean had risen before he got to her. There was a scarlet spot on either delicate cheek, and tear stains under the lovely eyes. He thought he had never seen her look more beautiful than as she stood there with her dark, slender figure drawn up against the background of green-blue sea and sky, and the breeze blowing the soft hair off her brow, and the panting breath coming and going upon the crimson flower of her mouth. He had meant to express surprise at finding her

there, to apologise for disturbing her; but all that went out of his head at the sight of the tears in her eyes, and he stretched out his hands to her, and said only one word instead, her name. But Jean had knotted her slender fingers behind her back; and there was nothing but real, honest anger in her tone as she answered him:

"Mr. Fenwick, what have you come here for? I told you I could not see you any more; and you had no right to follow me where you know I come to be alone. You have always been rude and discourteous to me, and I bore it. The other day you insulted me, and I would not bear it any longer; but what you are doing now is worse than anything that you have said; and you know it, because you are a man of the world, and a gentleman, and do not need to be taught what is right or manly."

There was a truth and dignity in her whole air and tone, even in the pose of her proud young head, which said more than her words, and brought a shamed colour into Keith's face. Of course she was right. What business had he to be there? In a humbler voice than he had ever yet used to her he answered her:

"Yes, I know it. You are quite right. It was a wrong thing to do, an ungentlemanly one, perhaps, but I wanted——" his breath came a little short, and he paused. "Jean," he said, coming nearer, with a little break in his voice "do you know that we are going away in one more week? I only heard of it to-day, and I could not bear my exile any longer. Can't you forgive me? I was a brate to speak to you as I did, but you don't know—I never meant to offend you. My God! if you only knew——!"

Jean made no answer. I doubt if she heard anything beyond those words, "we are going away in a week." The scarlet spots had died quite out of her brave young face; even her lips were pale; the purple cloud shadows drifting across her face like a pall upon the grey rocks and the little yellow blossoms in the sunlit grass, but she said nothing; only the waves broke with a roll of solemn music on the sands below, and Keith came nearer yet and spoke again:

"Is it beyond pardon," he said a little bitterly "even when a man asks it of you, as I do now, owning himself wrong? Of course I had no right to take you to task, to—— Do you think if you had been like any other woman to me that I would have

cared? But it was because you were not; and because another man could not understand, and spoke impertinently of you . . . It was that maddened me; that, and the feeling that I could not take him by the throat, and choke the words out of him there and then. Jean, have you any idea what you are to me, how fair, and sweet, and precious? Do you know that you are so sacred in my eyes that I cannot bear to see another hand touch yours over freely, another gaze rest on you except in reverence. Take the truth if you will. I love you, Jean. I never loved any woman in this world before; but you are not like any other. My darling, can't you forgive me? You have conquered me so, that I seem to have nothing left in life unless you love me. Jean," looking into her face with desperate, hungry entreaty, "do you think you could, if you tried? Hush! don't answer me hastily. I won't ask you for a word; only if you could—ay, even ever so little, be pitiful, and don't shrink from me now."

He stretched out his arms as he spoke, drawing her slim young figure towards him till he held it in a firm clasp, held it for one moment against the passionate beating of his heart, and bent his knee before her, as in old days men have bent and clung to the image of the Virgin Queen to save them in their hour of despair. And Jean did not shrink, only trembled very much; and when he asked her, with tears of agitation in the blue eyes which had always looked so cold and critical before: "Is it possible? Can you really care for me, my love?" laid her small, brown hand, flower cool, upon his brow, and answered softly: "Only you must not scold me again; for I think I have cared for you all the time; and it hurt me—you do not know how it hurt me—when you spoke so."

Only one week! Keith's news had been quite correct; and there was only that now before the two lovers, who twenty-four hours back were not on speaking terms with one another. One week, seven days, a short time for those who have but just entered into Paradise, and know that at the end the flaming sword of separation is before them; harshly, cruelly short, and dwindling so rapidly from seven to six, and thence to four and two, until the last day has come, and only a few hours lie between the pair, whose lives had suddenly flashed into unity, and the parting which—bad to both—seemed worse than death to one at least of them.

To Jean this week had been like a dream: one long dream of happiness, too new and too intense for any realising; a dream which had changed her whole nature and made her shy and silent, throwing a misty gentleness into her eyes, and making her shrink from loud voices and gaiety, and content to sit quietly with her head resting on her lover's shoulder, and his arm round her; a dream which so intensified and irradiated the exquisite bloom of her youth and beauty, that Keith himself was fain to hold her so, speechless for very fulness of words, and only now and then touching her brow and lips and hair with mute, worshipping caresses.

No one else knew of their engagement; for though Jean had no fear at all of her father making any objection—he was at once too careless of, and indulgent to her—Keith had begged her to say nothing on the subject until he had written to his own parents and obtained their consent; and his young sweetheart knew too little of the ways of the world, and was too absolutely reliant on her lover's wisdom and superior judgment, to dream of disobeying him. Of course, the fact that "the woman hater was hit hard at last" was soon patent to everybody, as also that Jean's animosity to him had suddenly disappeared; but no one guessed how matters really stood between them, and no one received a hint. Keith's brother officers indeed rather resented the change as it was; for before Jean had seemed to belong to them all equally; but Fenwick was not an easy fellow to chaff; and after all, sailors' visits generally ended this way, and there were plenty of other girls where they were going. He might have admired her openly though, they agreed, instead of pretending to dislike and sneer at the dear little princess through three parts of their stay.

They had her all to themselves on the last morning, however. There had been numerous and hearty farewells spoken in every house in the little settlement; but Mr. Coniston's was fairly besieged, and its owner's hand nearly wrung off, while Jean won all hearts' allegiance by the unaffected sorrow in her sweet face, and the way in which the tears would well up into her eyes as she said:

"Good-bye. I am so very, very sorry you are going. I wish you could have stayed with us."

As for Fenwick, he was nowhere to be seen.

His turn came later. He had seen Jean

on the previous evening, and had arranged it so that when all the others were on board he should come to say good-bye the last of all. It was almost dusk then, a calm, beautiful evening, and silvery twilight shadows were beginning to creep over the glassy bosom of the harbour, and struggle with the pale yellow light yet lingering in the western sky. Over the water came the clank and rattle of chains and the "Heave-ho!" of the sailors getting ready for departure. There was a little crowd of people on deck, and another little crowd on the principal pier, all waving hands and handkerchiefs. You could see their reflections in the steel-grey water, where the heavy loggerhead ducks plashed and dived, making great circles in the shimmering light. Boats were plying busily to and fro, and flags flying. No one noticed Keith as he passed through the ever open door of the surveyor-general's hospitable house, and entered the little parlour where Jean and he had passed so many happy hours.

It was almost dark in there—for the window was small, and filled up by a great stand of scarlet geraniums, the fragrance from their leaves just stirred by the evening air—and at first he thought the room was empty; then something rose up suddenly out of the dimmest corner, a slender figure, with white shadowy face and stretched-out hands, and Keith said hoarsely: "Jean, come to me," and took it in his arms, and let it cling to him as though nothing, not even death, should ever tear it away.

Neither of them spoke. Jean was crying too bitterly for any words, and Keith's heart was full of a host of thoughts, fears, wishes, vain regrets, and bitter remorse, which till then had been resolutely kept out of it and driven away; and the minutes waned and dwindled one on top of the other, and the little clock on the chimney-piece ticked even faster and faster as if hurrying to meet the moment of departure; and suddenly a great deafening "boom" burst out of the stillness, drowning the faint hum of distant voices, making windows shake and doors rattle, scaring the sea-gulls overhead, and echoing and re-echoing among the grey old hills around—the gun from the flagship summoning all on board.

Keith started as if he had been shot.

"That is for me," he said hoarsely.

"Jean, look up and kiss me once more. No, lift up your face, I must see it again," and as she obeyed, and his gaze rested on the exquisite beauty of it, all marred and quivering with the intensity of her sorrow, he broke out passionately:

"Love, for pity's sake don't look so. Try to smile for my sake, and say something, if it's only a word, or I shall never forgive myself. Jean, my poor darling, we have been happy, have we not? And it's only for a year. I shall be back next summer. I will be back. My own, as God lives I will be true to you."

Somehow the word grated on the girl's wrung heart. She lifted her little face, tear-white and weary, from her lover's breast, and clasped her arms round his neck, looking at him with such a world of trusting, wistful love as was pitiful to behold.

"True!" echoed the poor child, half reproachfully. "Of course we will be true; but—oh! Keith, Keith, it is so hard to let you go."

And then, as he strained her to him in a last embrace, her hands suddenly relaxed, her head drooped, and when twenty minutes later the noble ship Parnassus sailed out of the Narrows amid the deafening cheers of those on deck and those on shore, there was only one house in the settlement without a farewell face at the window—that where Jean Coniston lay, still and senseless on the floor, with the pale evening light stealing through the geranium-leaves on her white rigid face.

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